

**Statement from Tasmanian Health Minister Sarah Courtney:**

I acknowledge and understand the concerns expressed by the families involved, and the Government always wants Tasmanians to receive the care they need sooner.

Our skilled clinicians are the experts in triaging patients according to clinical need, not politicians, and senior clinicians at the Royal Hobart Hospital remain engaged with Spencer's family.

We are investing a record sum into our health system, opening more beds and employing more staff, but we know there is still more to do.

The budget for health has never been higher in Tasmania. We are delivering a record \$8.1 billion over four years, which is \$2.3 billion more than when we came to Government.

Each year, the Department and Tasmanian Health Service plan the level and type of activity for Tasmania's health system, including the type and volume of elective surgeries, Emergency Department presentations and admissions to hospital for complex medical care, based on demand and available funding.

Investment for health has increased to 32 per cent of our budget, and we know there is increasing demand across our health system which need to be met, including increased demand for admission from Emergency Departments, and need for colonoscopies and other diagnostic procedures.

Endoscopies have been identified by clinicians as an area of need and it is expected that 2,248 additional colonoscopies will be provided to Tasmanian patients this financial year, as part of the first tranche of funding from the Morrison Government's \$91.9 million Tasmanian Health Plan.

Importantly, this is a multi-year program and we'll continue to work with clinicians to prioritise funds over the coming years, which is expected to include more elective surgeries and endoscopies, based on clinical advice.

In addition to this, our \$757 million plan for health includes almost 300 additional hospital beds, with more staff and more funding which will boost the level of surgery we can provide.